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DEC 12 2006

Amendments to the Claims:

Please cancel claim 38, and amend claims 16, 24, 30, 34, 35 and 36 as shown in the following listing of claims. This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

- 1 1. (original) An apparatus for polishing objects, said apparatus comprising:
 - 2 a polishing surface;
 - 3 an object carrier positioned over said polishing surface; and
 - 4 a load-and-unload cup configured to be pivoted to said object carrier
 - 5 about a pivoting point over said polishing surface so that said object can be
 - 6 transferred from said load-and-unload cup to said object carrier.
- 1 2. (original) The apparatus of claim 1 further comprising a second object carrier positioned over said polishing surface, and wherein said load-and-unload cup is further configured to be pivoted to said second object carrier so that a second object can be transferred from said load-and-unload cup to said second object carrier.
- 1 3. (original) The apparatus of claim 1 further comprising a second load-and-unload cup configured to be pivoted to said object carrier about a second pivoting point over said polishing surface so that a second object can be transferred from said second load-and-unload cup to said object carrier.
- 1 4. (original) The apparatus of claim 1 further comprising:
 - 2 a second object carrier positioned over said polishing surface; and
 - 3 a second load-and-unload cup configured to be pivoted to said second object carrier about a second pivoting point over said polishing surface so that a second object can be transferred from said second load-and-unload cup to said second object carrier.

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1 5. (original) The apparatus of claim 4 further comprising a third object carrier
2 positioned over said polishing surface, wherein said load-and-unload cup and said
3 second load-and-unload cup are further configured to be pivoted to said third object
4 carrier so that a third object can be transferred from one of said load-and-unload cup
5 and said second load-and-unload cup to said third object carrier.

1 6. (original) The apparatus of claim 4 further comprising third and fourth object
2 carriers positioned over said polishing surface, and wherein said load-and-unload cup
3 is further configured to be pivoted to said third object carrier so that a third object can
4 be transferred from said load-and-unload cup to said third object carrier and wherein
5 said second load-and-unload cup is further configured to be pivoted to said fourth
6 object carrier so that a fourth object can be transferred from said second load-and-
7 unload cup to said fourth object carrier.

1 7. (original) The apparatus of claim 1 further comprising a second load-and-
2 unload cup configured to be pivoted to said object carrier about said pivoting point so
3 that a second object can be transferred from said second load-and-unload cup to said
4 object carrier.

1 8. (original) The apparatus of claim 1 further comprising:
2 a second object carrier positioned over said polishing surface; and
3 a second load-and-unload cup configured to be pivoted to said second
4 object carrier about said pivoting point so that a second object can be transferred from
5 said second load-and-unload cup to said second object carrier.

1 9. (original) The apparatus of claim 1 wherein said load-and-unload cup includes
2 a wafer handling lifter that can be vertically extended to load said object onto said
3 object carrier and unload said object from said object carrier.

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1 10. (original) A method for polishing objects, said method comprising:
2 pivoting an object to be polished to an object carrier about a pivoting
3 point over a polishing surface;

4 loading said object onto said object carrier;
5 moving said object carrier so that said object on said object carrier is
6 placed on said polishing surface; and
7 polishing said object on said polishing surface.

1 11. (original) The method of claim 10 further comprising:
2 pivoting a second object to be polished to a second object carrier about
3 said pivoting point;
4 loading said second object onto said second object carrier;
5 moving said second object carrier so that said second object on said
6 second object carrier is placed on said polishing surface; and
7 polishing said second object on said polishing surface.

1 12. (original) The method of claim 11 wherein said pivoting of said first object
2 and said pivoting of said second object includes pivoting first and second load-and-
3 unload cups about said pivoting point.

1 13. (original) The method of claim 10 further comprising:
2 pivoting a second object to be polished to said object carrier about a
3 second pivoting point;
4 loading said second object onto said object carrier;
5 moving said object carrier so that said second object on said object
6 carrier is placed on said polishing surface; and
7 polishing said second object on said polishing surface.

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1 14. (original) The method of claim 10 further comprising:
2 pivoting a second object to be polished to a second object carrier about
3 a second pivoting point;
4 loading said second object onto said second object carrier;
5 moving said second object carrier so that said second object on said
6 second object carrier is placed on said polishing surface; and
7 polishing said second object on said polishing surface.

1 15. (original) The method of claim 14 further comprising:
2 pivoting a third object to be polished to a third object carrier about one
3 of said pivoting point and said second pivoting point;
4 loading said third object onto said third object carrier;
5 moving said third object carrier so that said third object on said third
6 object carrier is placed on said polishing surface; and
7 polishing said third object on said polishing surface.

1 16. (currently amended) The method of claim 15 further comprising:
2 pivoting a fourth object to be polished to a fourth object carrier about
3 one of said pivoting point and said second pivoting point that differs from said third
4 object;
5 loading said fourth object onto said fourth object carrier;
6 moving said fourth object carrier so that said fourth object on said
7 fourth object carrier is placed on said polishing surface; and
8 polishing said fourth object on said polishing surface. [.]

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1 18. (original) The apparatus of claim 17 wherein said at least one polishing
2 surface includes first and second polishing surfaces, and wherein said first object
3 carrier is positioned over said first polishing surface and said second object carrier is
4 positioned over said second polishing surface.

1 19. (original) The apparatus of claim 18 further comprising:
2 a third polishing surface;
3 a third object carrier positioned over said third polishing surface; and
4 a second load-and-unload cup configured to be moved between said
5 second and third object carriers to transfer said one of said second object and a third
6 object to one of said second and third object carriers.

1 20. (original) The apparatus of claim 19 wherein said first, second and third
2 polishing surfaces are positioned in a linear configuration.

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- 1 21. (original) The apparatus of claim 18 further comprising:
 - 2 third and fourth polishing surfaces;
 - 3 third and fourth object carriers, said third object carrier being
 - 4 positioned over said third polishing surface, said fourth object carrier being
 - 5 positioned over said fourth polishing surface; and
 - 6 a second load-and-unload cup configured to be moved between said
 - 7 third and fourth object carriers to transfer one of said second object, a third object and
 - 8 a fourth object to one of said third and fourth object carriers.
- 1 22. (original) The apparatus of claim 21 wherein said first, second, third and
- 2 fourth polishing surface are positioned in an L-shaped configuration.
- 1 23. (original) The apparatus of claim 17 wherein said load-and-unload cup
- 2 includes a wafer handling lifter that can be vertically extended to load said object
- 3 onto said object carrier and unload said object from said object carrier.
- 1 24. (currently amended) A method for polishing objects, said method comprising:
 - 2 transporting an object to be polished to a load-and-unload cup;
 - 3 moving said load-and-unload cup to ~~an~~ a first object carrier, including
 - 4 pivoting said load-and-unload cup, said first object carrier being one of two object
 - 5 carriers to which said load-and-unload cup can be moved;
 - 6 loading said object onto said first object carrier;
 - 7 moving said first object carrier so that said object on said first object
 - 8 carrier is placed on at least one polishing surface; and
 - 9 polishing said object on said at least one polishing surface.

- 1 25. (original) The method of claim 24 further comprising:
 - 2 moving said load-and-unload cup to a second object carrier to transfer
 - 3 one of said object and a second object, said second object carrier being one of said
 - 4 two object carriers;
 - 5 loading one of said object and said second object onto said second
 - 6 object carrier;
 - 7 moving said second object carrier so that one of said object and said
 - 8 second object on said second object carrier is placed on said at least one polishing
 - 9 surface; and
 - 10 polishing one of said object and said second object on said at least one
 - 11 polishing surface.

1 26. (original) The method of claim 25 wherein said moving of said first object
2 carrier and said moving of said second object carrier include moving said first and
3 second object carriers so that said object on said first object carrier is placed on a first
4 polishing surface and one of said object and said second object on said second object
5 carrier is placed on a second polishing surface.

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1 30. (currently amended) An apparatus for polishing objects, said apparatus
2 comprising:

3 a polishing surface;

4 first and second object carriers positioned over said polishing surface,
5 said first object carrier being configured to hold a first object to be polished, said
6 second object carrier being configured to hold a second object to be polished, said
7 first and second object carriers being further configured to independently polish said
8 first and second objects on said polishing surface;[[.]]

9 a first load-and-unload cup configured to be pivoted to said first object
10 carrier to transfer said first object to and from said first object carrier; and

11 a second load-and-unload cup configured to be pivoted to said second
12 object carrier to transfer said second object to and from said second object carrier.

1 31. (original) The apparatus of claim 30 wherein said first and second load-and-
2 unload cups are configured to be pivoted about pivoting points over said polishing
3 surface.

1 32. (original) The apparatus of claim 30 wherein said load-and-unload cup
2 includes a wafer handling lifter that can be vertically extended to load said object
3 onto said object carrier and unload said object from said object carrier.

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1 34. (currently amended) The method of claim 33 34 wherein said pivoting
2 includes pivoting said first object about a first pivoting axis to said first object carrier
3 and said second object about a second pivoting axis to said second object carrier, said
4 first and second pivoting axes being located over said polishing surface.

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1 36. (currently amended) The apparatus of claim 35 wherein said pivoting axis
2 point of said first and second load-and-unload cups is located over said at least one
3 polishing surface.

1 37. (original) The apparatus of claim 36 wherein said at least one polishing
2 surface includes first and second polishing surfaces and said at least one object carrier
3 includes first and second object carriers, said first object carrier being positioned over
4 said first polishing surface, said second object carrier being positioned over said
5 second polishing surface.

1 38. (canceled).

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